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AUTHOR Alexander, Benjamin H.; Royster, Preston M.
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ABSTRACT

Educational progress for black people requires elimination of racial prejudice and discrimination against the poor. Several issues relating to the education of black people are discussed: (1) blacks continue to be incorrectly stereotyped as intellectually inferior; (2) historically, blacks suffered from discriminatory educational practices; (3) parents, friends, and relatives of some black students, as well as the students themselves, need to provide educational motivation because it is evident that achievement is possible despite the obstacles set up by others; (4) the academic environment needs attention--with efforts being made toward making learning as interesting and enjoyable as possible; (5) failing students should be retained until they learn a given grade level's material--past problems in this area have caused many students to be unprepared for high school and college work; (6) universities should be relatively flexible in their admissions policies, denying admission only to those students with no possibility of successfully performing college work; (7) a return to the basics in education can be based on a national or core curriculum; (8) both the minds and bodies of athletes need to be developed in colleges; (9) standard English, not black English, should be stressed in all schools; and (10) affirmative action efforts should continue, since they have generally been helpful. (DCS)

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Issues in the Educational Progress of Black People

Benjamin H. Alexander
with
Preston M. Royster

"Share a commitment to the American Dream and you know that both excellence and equal opportunity in education are essential to realizing our ideals and aspirations as Americans."

T. H. Bell, Secretary of Education
December 6, 1983
Indianapolis, Indiana

Introduction

A discourse on educational issues which grew out of or is affected by racial attitudes, racial policies and racial practices is a very delicate and sensitive undertaking. This is true for several reasons: (1) practices that are racial often are not recognized as such and their impact and consequences are frequently not understood, (2) what is needed to correct previous policies and practices is commonly attacked on philosophical or political grounds as being either unfair or reverse discrimination, and (3) in some instances knowledgeable black people are reluctant or afraid to express views that stray from or do not appear to be a carbon copy of the views of "black leaders." Conse-

quently, measures that appear to be good at their inception, but ones that would be more beneficial for black youths by being altered and improved, are left unchanged out of fear of being ridiculed. Moreover, if a white or moderate black person proposes a change in favored programs and practices intended to enhance educational experience for black youth, the reaction may be doubly explosive. As a result, full dialogue and analysis are shunned.

For example, let's look briefly at the concepts of *equal* and *fair* which are often not understood in educational practice. Consider the instance in which there are two recent high school students—one black and one white—who demonstrate equal abilities and potential. The black student has taken advanced mathematics including a course in calculus. The white student has a similar experience, except that he did not take an equivalent course in calculus. The black college instructor, in his attempt to be absolutely unbiased and equal in his treatment of these students, lectures to both in class but may refuse, even when requested, to provide extra assistance to either. The instructor perceives that he is carrying out the intent and spirit of equal and fair treatment. Clearly, the underprepared student needs some additional assistance to overcome his academic deficit which came from previous denial. To some people this instructor has obviously misunderstood and misapplied the intent of equity and fairness. The spirit of equal and fair to them embraces the concept of special help when needed. The instructor who did not provide the special help, rightly or wrongly, is often accused of being biased.

This chapter will aim at identifying and discussing some issues affecting the education of black people. The authors, who are themselves black, understand through many years of experience and involvement in education, that historically black people were not allowed to receive any education because of various practices. We recognize also that enormous progress by our people has been made in the past several decades. Nevertheless, as the developing needs of American society have mandated changes in the level

and type of education that white students are expected to achieve, society must mandate the same changes and expectations for black students.

If we were to examine the pattern of attainment of educational progress by various white ethnic groups in the United States, it would be obvious that the children of poor whites (immigrant or otherwise) never have had the same educational opportunities as the children of middle and upper class whites. To a greater extent the problems facing black children today likewise stem from the fact that many of them are poor. However, we recognize that it was wrong in the past when America gave preferential educational treatment to more affluent whites,[1] and it is wrong today to give such treatment to any ethnic group.

As will be seen later, the educational progress of black people today continues to lag in part because of society's differential support of the affluent. In addition, the historical prejudices (which will be briefly described) have not been completely removed. Thus educational progress for black people requires elimination of racial prejudices and discrimination against the poor.

Stereotyping and Learning

The belief that people of any racial, social or economic level are inferior has a strong negative impact upon the educational attainment of that ethnic group. Just a few years ago, white members of the Washington, D.C. Board of Education received a book on educational matters from a well-known, now deceased southern U.S. Senator. The book was entitled, *Race and Reason, A Yankee View*, by Carleton Putnam.

One of our white friends on the Board gave a copy of the book to the black Board members to read. After reading it, there was no doubt in the minds of the minority Board members that the Senator's message to the white Board members was: don't do anything wasteful; you are not dealing with real people in the D.C. Public Schools (whose students are mostly black); you can't make folks like you and me out of those subhumans. The book cites tests and

various other data picked up from many sources to try to prove that black people, as a group, have less brain-power than white people. This book by Putnam strongly supports the arguments of people who want to expound the thesis of black inferiority.

By providing some figures, some statistics, some percentages, and some names of tests and places and research projects, this book has enabled some anti-black people to out-talk others (sometimes by sheer loudness of voice) as they pour out Putnam's "facts and figures." This book presents in great detail and depth what many anti-black people want to read and believe.

There is another way to say that black people are educationally inferior—and that is to say it openly. A recent example of stereotyping, "The Intelligence Question/Are Black People Stupid?," is the title of a lengthy front-page article by Ms. Flora Johnson that appeared in a popular, widely read Chicago newspaper several years ago.[2]

Prior to discussing this article, which deals with the intellect, it should be made clear that development of the mind holds the greatest promise for the advancement of black people. If the mind is educationally undernourished, the person is underdeveloped. A lack of quality education for black people cannot be permitted.

Now to Ms. Johnson! She starts her article condescendingly by saying "Each of us knows black people who are not stupid . . . possibly even two or three." The message contained in the rest of the very long article indicates that the great majority of black people are stupid. The following are further quotations from this front-page article: "They say they are not stupid. The schools say they are . . . all black people score 12 to 15 points lower on IQ tests than all white people do. Even middle class black people."

According to Ms. Johnson, black people average 15 points lower on IQ scales than whites and are therefore inferior. The above is categorically untrue, as every learned person knows. Benjamin Alexander[3] spoke to this issue over fifteen years ago, and several times thereafter.[4,5] The facts are: the results of the testing of all soldiers in World

War II show that the average IQ of black soldiers from northern Ohio was higher than the average of white soldiers from eleven southern states. Moreover, the IQ average of black troops from the Boston area was higher than whites from many northern states and from all the southern and borderline southern states.[6]

Ms. Johnson's description of black people continues:

> The skinny men with their big asses, whose fashionable clothes are stained with grease. The tired women who move their legs as though they were shifting the trunks of trees. The kids in torn sneakers with radios three times the size of their brains. The young women whose stiff hair has been bleached to the color of copper, who can barely walk in their tight jeans and high heels, whose tight T-shirts are likely to say something mildly obscene . . . in one of Chicago's many all black schools, a child spends the days curled up in a feral position, asleep on his desk . . . another child, 13 years old, has brought her baby daughter to class.

Ms. Johnson projects the image that black citizens may be not quite human beings. Oh, "two or three" of them are likeable, and you can become attached to these "two or three," just the same as you become attached to a faithful dog—you may even cry at its death—but black people just do not have good sense.

Where do such beliefs come from? Why do people write and speak so strongly about black people's intelligence in the face of the fact that many black employees are performing well in jobs that were performed only by whites until just a few years ago? The feeling that black Americans are inferior is not necessarily conveyed only by hostile white people. It is true that some of these appraisals even come from some black leaders, as well as white liberals who have distorted reality to many black people. Directly or indirectly they have persuaded too many black Americans that America owes them a living because they were previously slaves, and that they should do nothing until this nation gives them the 40 acres and a mule that were promised in the late nineteenth century. Some also state that it is totally unfair and racist toward black athletes to expect them to

earn a score of 700 or better on SAT tests for entrance into college and to be able to participate in college athletics. Some of these same spokesmen are also strong advocates for teaching black children black English, with the claim that its use is in the best interest of black students.[7] Many of these same people are also strong supporters of forms of bilingual education that hinder the mastery of English by children whose primary language is not English.

The perceptions of blacks enunciated above do not reflect the present attitude of the majority of American people. However, the harm done is significant, because it influences public policy and practices even today.[8] Equally harmful is the damage to the self-confidence of the victims of these perceptions, those black people who are struggling against the obstacles of poverty and inferior educational opportunities.

Historical Educational Beginnings

In earlier days, by law and practice education was forbidden to black people. In later times, due to judicial and other pressures, separate and all-too-unequal educational opportunities became available in public education. Until very recent times the private sector (mainly composed of black people themselves) offered the best hope for insuring that black youth were removed from the rolls of the illiterate, especially in the south where the great majority of black people lived.

The educational experiences of black people in America are noteworthy. Black people are the only ethnic group which came to America speaking a language other than English and which was systematically and under the protection of law denied the opportunity to obtain an education. More basic than that, they were afforded no encouragement, support or opportunity even to learn to speak the English language properly.[9]

Discriminatory practices never appeared to be very rational. Neither did they seem to be implemented on a systematic basis. Nevertheless, educational experiences in sections of Virginia are illustrative of the difficulties and the

slow progress made in many areas even after blacks were permitted to attend school.

Halifax County, which is situated in the south central part of the Commonwealth of Virginia, ranks fourth in area among all the counties in Virginia. It had a population of 41,365 in 1920 and 36,965 in 1970. In 1920 the population was 49% black and in 1970 40% black. The County started public education for white students in 1870, but elementary schools were not provided for black students until approximately 20 years later.[10]

Even when public elementary education was made available for black children, the public support consisted of meager salaries paid to the teachers; therefore, it was necessary that salaries be supplemented by the community in which the schools were located. The schools were usually built by community effort on donated land. Attendance at the schools was frequently poor because of the farming chores the children had to perform. Even though education was public, nearly all of the early public grammar schools were started by the self-help concept, which was not unique to Halifax County but permeated the south. Most schools originated under church sponsorship and survived because of individual initiative.

The schools were small and poorly equipped. They generally had one room and one teacher. In addition to teaching basics, the teacher looked after maintenance chores—supervising children, sweeping the floor and applying oil on the floor to keep the dust settled, and cutting wood or shoveling coal to keep the school warm.[11]

These early grammar schools were usually under the supervision of white board members who often were the very same citizens who under slavery had made it an offense against the law for slaves to be educated. Consequently, they gave a low priority to educating their former subjects.[12]

The conditions of and support of secondary schools were no better than for elementary schools. Secondary schools also had their beginnings through the efforts of the churches and a few dedicated individuals. There were at

least two private black high schools in the County before 1900. As with the elementary schools, land was donated or permission was given to build on land that would revert to the owner when the school was no longer needed.[13]

The first of these high schools in Halifax County was the Antrim Church and Mission School, which was founded a decade after slavery ended, and was operated by the Antrim Parish of the Episcopal Church. It was the only such school for the newly freed slaves.[14]

The second of these schools was the Halifax Normal Institute, which was built and operated by the Banister Baptist Association from 1897 to 1920. Considering the financial sources of support and the level of sophistication of the Association members, the facilities were unusual, composed of several wooden buildings. One building was used for administration, another for industrial arts and other subjects, a third building for classes and a cafeteria and another as a dormitory for girls.[15]

This school was of special significance because it led directly to the establishment of the first public high school for black citizens in the County. In the early 1920s the old Halifax Institute buildings were purchased by the Halifax County School Board, to be operated as a public high school in much the same manner as it had operated as a private institution.[16]

Transportation for black students only came about in 1936, and then by using privately owned buses. It had been provided for white students beginning with the 1928-29 school year. The real irony of these circumstances was that the poorest, least educated and least self-sufficient group of citizens was provided the fewest of the services essential to their advancement. The black students had to pay room and board to attend the high school; moreover, their parents had to raise funds to help support the expansion of the school facilities, and they had also to find ways to support the provision of transportation for their children to the high school. The fact that most of the black children could not participate in the high school program seems rather evident. The County first initiated a public high school for

black citizens approximately fifty years after public high school education was established for white citizens. For those who do not understand why such a large proportion of older black citizens are educationally deficient, this is a large part of the answer.

The above related to a rural southern county in Virginia. It is not unique. Fairfax County, now a suburban area of Washington, D.C., did not open its public high schools on an integrated basis until September 1954 or three months after the *Brown Decision* outlawed segregated education.

Poverty, Disadvantage and Achievement

For too long, the lack of progress of black children in education has been linked only to the previous years of neglect inflicted by white decision-makers. Too little, if any attention, has focused on individual and community efforts that must take place to catapult current and future generations of black and other minority children into well-educated, achieving and successful citizens. Past denial and abuse cannot be refuted—neither can the responsibility that both individuals and groups have to care for themselves. The tasks under consideration require mammoth sacrifice and strong self-will. Often parents have to forego immediate pleasure and gratification to afford a better future for their children. Likewise, children must be willing and strong enough to share their parents' vision by doing well in school so the sacrifices will not be in vain. Had more families and students understood this in the past—and confronted the problems at a personal level—many years of helplessness would have been averted. The time has long passed when black people in America can avoid or deny a portion of the responsibility for their educational status.

Today, unlike in the past, the performance of various ethnic groups is being identified. Test data, contrary to what some have said, show that some ethnic groups do better than others even though each has experienced some poverty and discrimination. For example, an interesting article based upon Department of Education studies shows that Asian students, many of whom earlier had language prob-

lems, rank number one over all other U.S. ethnic groups in class standing, admission to Ivy League colleges, academic honors, and doctoral degrees in science.[17] This outstanding showing of Asians contrasts with the statements of some black leaders (and white ultra-liberals as well) that black students are near the low end of the totem pole in education because they live in poverty and face severe discrimination. Were this the sole reason for low performance among black youth, Asian children likely would not have progressed so much higher than other minority children. For it is well-known that many of their families very recently came to America. Most of them were poor and handicapped with a language barrier as well.

Asian students have succeeded educationally over white, brown and black students in spite of racism and poverty, perhaps in good part because they generally obtain more parental encouragement, study harder, have strong self-images, respond more positively to discipline and work harder; therefore, racism and poverty cannot be accepted as the sole explanation for the educational level of some blacks.

Great black achievers of past generations,[18] such as Dr. George Washington Carver, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Mordecai Johnson, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, and Ms. Allice Allison Dunnigan,[19] who grew up without luxury and in the midst of severe racial problems, would agree. Outstanding black individuals of this generation such as Drs. Joe Henry, W. W. Sullivan, Kitty Robinson, Gladys Peterson, all born in modest circumstances and under similar racial barriers, would likely agree also.

By today's standards all of the above named black people probably would have considered themselves poor and disadvantaged, but unlike too many of today's black children, their parents failed to inform them that they were not supposed to excel and instead gave them strong encouragement and love and instilled in them a philosophy of excellence and self-discipline. These were black parents who said "no" when it would have been easier to say "yes," parents who demanded excellence at home and in family

life as well as in the classroom. To these parents their children came first and this meant preparing them to survive and excel in America, and to grow up prepared for a world that was not always fair, humane or honest. They prepared their children, through strong discipline, for the real world that is tough, competitive, and often discriminatory and where academic excellence is prized and a lack of education is scorned.

On the other hand, too many black parents today seem to be sheltering their children from the real world, making life too easy for them, insisting upon special academic treatment for them, relaxing discipline, lowering academic standards in the schools and failing to insist that their children do their best. Actually, too many parents are failing to encourage their children to strive for an education, and the results are that many schools are graduating great numbers of students who are deficient in their ability to read, write and compute.

Reinforcement and motivation of black students by their elders is certainly a strong positive factor which can lead to greatly enhanced achievement. Thus, while recognizing historical obstacles and present educational system deficiencies, black people should not only identify what may be holding them back, they should strive to overcome these obstacles.

Far too often black students have heard that competency tests and particularly standardized tests are discriminatory against them. Let us assume that this is correct and that the tests are biased. Black students still have no choice but to prepare for these tests, take them, and pass them. No matter what some may say, competency tests do indicate what a person has learned up to a certain period of his education or life, i.e., after the sixth grade, tweifth grade, four years of college, or whatever.

Test scores that have been released in the past ten years show time and time again that black students generally score at the lower end when compared to their Asian counterparts. A good guess as to why black youths on a whole do not perform well on competency examinations is

that they have not been properly taught to take standardized tests.

Teachers find that it is easy for black children to learn that ⅙ plus ⅛ equals 7/24 or ⅝ divided by ⅜ equals 20/9; that they can also recognize what is wrong with a picture showing a car with only three wheels or a tiger with only one eye. Therefore, if black students are taught properly, they will pass such tests; moreover, rather than opposing competency tests we suggest making sure that black youth are trained to pass them, whether the tests are biased or not biased.

It is odd that many black students who cannot pass these competency tests do so well in athletics. Why are black athletes so good in sports? Because they practice, practice and practice. When many Americans go to work in the morning they see black youngsters practicing basketball prior to school. On their way home from work, they see youngsters again practicing basketball, and many continue to practice from the time school lets out until dark. This is also true for the other sports in the appropriate season. Athletic-oriented students also practice many hours on Saturday and Sunday. They work hard at being good in basketball, baseball and football—and they are good; their hard work pays off. If they practiced their studies the same way, they would be equally good in English, math, science and computer operations, and they would be able to do better in competency and standardized tests.

Moreover, discipline is essential and strong in sports and there are no exceptions to the rules. The coaches, because of the "winning is everything" philosophy, will not give any kind of special treatment that consists of excusing inferior performance or overlooking poor behavior, and, most important of all, the athletes do not wish or expect special treatment.

Here again it is evident that achievement is possible despite the obstacles set up by others. To the motivation provided by parents, relatives and friends can be added self-motivation, with the realization that the goal is worthy of the chase.

Importance of the Academic Environment

A heartening report by Ogletree and Chambers[20] indicates that black students are more perceptive of the importance of their education than they are often credited to be. Further, they are sensitive to the necessity for their school environment to be seriously dedicated to instruction and not merely a way station for self-indulgence.

This study indicates that many children in the inner city are aware that earning an education is not all fun but a serious and demanding task and that their deliverance from the ghetto will come from education. Most of these students, surprisingly, know so well that nothing comes easy, nothing is promised to them and certainly only a little is given to them.

The report made by Olgetree and Chambers is based on a survey of inner city high school students in Chicago. Prior to the study, their educational colleagues guessed that the responses of the students would be the opposite of what they actually turned out to be in almost every instance. Some of the questions asked of the inner city students were as follows:

- Should students have freedom of speech in the classroom, i.e., should they be allowed to talk whenever they wish? *59% said NO.*
- Should students be allowed to use informal slang (street language) in the classroom? *71% said NO.*
- Should students have the right to argue with their teachers? *81% said NO.*
- Should students who continually disrupt class be expelled from school? *60% said YES.*
- Should students who use drugs and alcohol in school be expelled? *56% said YES.*
- Should students who sell drugs in school be expelled? *62% said YES.*
- Should the school have the right to establish a standard of hygiene? *66% said YES.*

Here is convincing evidence that disadvantaged students recognize that the answer to their dreams is in education. With perhaps little help or encouragement from parents or environment, these students have learned that an education is very precious. They have recognized that an educated person is more likely to succeed than an uneducated one, and that an education is vital if one wishes to advance.

The attainment of an education is normally an activity for children, adolescents and young adults prior to their entry into a profession or job. This fact should be kept in mind when pondering whether education is a leisure time activity or otherwise. For school age children, attending school is their principal activity just as work is for adults. In this sense, getting an education is children's work. For adults who are already in the work force, further educational attainment involves an additional burden, chore or hardship.

Even so, education is a necessary part of the American experience which should, therefore, be made as enjoyable as possible. At best, getting an education is difficult, it is demanding, it is essential and usually neither fun nor easy. Schooling, or getting educated, requires incentives, and clearly known benefits to motivate one to participate.

For black youngsters some of these ingredients have often been missing. Consequently, too many of them have not persisted in the pursuit of a good education. Following slavery and up to the late 1960s and 1970s, black citizens could look forward to opportunities in only a few professions—teaching, medicine, law, preaching, funeral directing and several others. Limited fruitful and profitable futures coupled with years of systematic and purposeful denial of education to black children have tended to discourage black youths from going into careers they dearly would like to pursue, and have made an otherwise laborious and grinding experience less desirable or tolerable.

In spite of all that has been said thus far, schooling can be made approachable and acceptable. One needs to know or feel reasonably sure that the rewards for hard work and sacrifice are waiting for those who persist. For black young-

sters in particular, this is precisely what affirmative action efforts have done—they have opened entry to hundreds of very lucrative and prestigious opportunities that were closed prior to the late 1960s. Black youngsters previously did not pursue preparation for these fields but they realistically channeled their preparation toward what was attainable. Nowadays there is little if any excuse for not pursuing any of a large variety of occupational areas and attaining both satisfaction and great reward.

Educational experiences could be presented in a variety of ways to reduce boredom and make them more lively and enjoyable. This is nothing new, however, but more effort and experimentation could go into varying instruction more successfully.

To the extent possible instructional programs could be experience and interest related. For example, the mathematics program for elementary children who are interested in sports could include calculations dealing with facts related to football, basketball, etc. Again, this is not new but improvements are needed prior to any wide scale use of these techniques. A word of caution, however, is necessary. If care is not taken, efforts to make a subject fun could result in situations where the subject content is so diluted as to render the class meaningless.

The bottom line, however, is that we must face the fact that in general schooling or education is not mainly fun. It is tough; it can be draining and it requires hours of reading and analyzing. There is no way to avoid these activities. An additional fact is that no promise has been made that getting an education is or should be easy. It has always been exacting and frequently difficult, it will remain that way and that is the way it should be. One of the most important outcomes that the educational process is designed to produce is discipline—itself.

Every American should be able to read and write well. Educators do a disservice to students if they permit them to leave the grade school or high school ill-equipped to do so. Barbara Leslie Jordan made the point so beautifully in a speech, "Without reading ability, the greatest ideas ever

thought, the most beautiful ideas ever expressed (or even the smartest), will be lost to that person forever. He will be intellectually crippled."

Reading is not just a problem to minority students, as many are aware. Basic communication skills are lacking throughout our society. It has become a sad fact, recognized by many, that college graduates, some with advanced degrees in business and the sciences, have such poor communication and enunciation skills that they cannot speak or even write simple correspondence or draft reports. Because of this, many corporations are requiring some of their employees to return to the classroom to learn basic reading, writing and communication skills as a prerequisite for advancement. Success in the competitive marketplace requires a command of the English language and the ability to read and communicate the written word.[21]

If the situation is bad for a white person who can't read well, it is worse for a black person. No matter what anyone says, if one cannot read, one will not succeed. Many black youths, today, live in an environment of fads and symbols such as handshakes, hair styles, slogans, disco music, and attitudes of passivity compounded by ghetto community pressure. Since they often respond to the influence of symbols and fads, maybe it is time that the society started selling reading to them as industry sells its products to them. For example, reading is like a Coke. Why do we say that? Because reading is "the real thing." Reading is like General Electric—"it lights your path." Moreover, reading is like a Hallmark Card—"it lets you be the very best." Reading is also like a Pepsi—"it's got a lot to give," and finally, reading is like a Slow-Poke Sucker—"it lasts a long, long time."

Reading is essential to becoming more productive and more responsible. One learns to read to be able to compete with articulate people. One needs to be able to read so that he or she will know the roots from which he or she came. If a person can read, travel will not be necessary to enable one to learn more about geography. Reading will give the knowledge of geography that will broaden one's scope and

perspective about other people and other lands of the world. It is very important to the future of this country that we have a literate population.

A Need for Academic Improvement

When this nation was formed, its early leaders recognized the value of education, and over the years there has been a growing commitment to educational accessibility for ever increasing segments of its citizenry. John Adams once said, "I must carry a gun that my son may carry a plow that his son may carry a book." President James Madison said it another way, "Knowledge will always conquer ignorance."

For black Americans specifically, academic development should not be for its own sake. It should be for the enrichment of their lives, for expanded opportunity, for the sheer enjoyment of knowing how to distinguish between truth and error, good and evil, and between that which is first-rate and that which is second-rate.

All of us know that it is better for black children to be able to count and read, rather than not to be able to count and read, and that it is far better for black citizens to be literate than illiterate. A literate person is much better qualified to defend himself than is an illiterate one. The illiterate is much easier to exploit, to take advantage of, and to cheat. Uneducated black people have always received fewer of the benefits of our society and this will continue to be the case until their educational level is raised. It is for this reason that black Americans must strive toward academic improvement, and the setting of high academic standards.

Before World War II, the majority of lower income children received very little education. Going to school, particularly to college, was a luxury they could not long afford. Those few who did make it were very highly motivated; moreover, they were properly trained in the skills and tools of learning. When they were promoted from grade to grade in school, it really meant something. It meant that they had mastered the subject matter that was supposed to be covered in the school year. If they did not, they were held back and required to repeat the grade.

But since then changes have come about. The first change was a national commitment to education after World War II; America now provides wider and greater opportunities in education than it did before. Now there are a multitude of young people in educational institutions who just a generation ago would never have made it. That is a good change.

The other change—an undesirable one—was the introduction of "social promotion" to the nation's school systems because educators decided that it was wrong to hold children back. They contended that children should be kept with their age group, regardless of whether they had learned anything or not. So, large numbers of students were moved from one grade to the next higher level with serious deficiences. This whole atmosphere of permissiveness, although wrong, was probably created by people with very worthy motives. Too many teachers and professors felt a collective sense of guilt for the massive number of underprivileged students and their families. In other words, the teachers and professors were filled with compassion for these youngsters. They hated to give them failing grades but also found it much easier simply to pass them along rather than to be hassled, cajoled and threatened.

The result is that educators now find themselves confronted with the problems created because many of these students are not adequately prepared to do either high school or college work. No student should be passed from grade to grade who has not mastered specific subject content. A concerted effort should be made to provide the student with the tools and skills needed to pass reading, writing and arithmetic; however, if these efforts fail, he should not be passed to a higher grade, but should repeat the grade with additional assistance. Should he fail for a second time, he would be better off if placed in a specialized educational environment.

Today there are students wanting to enter college who are not properly prepared to do college work. Several alternatives are open to a university in such a situation. First of all, standards can be set so high that very few students

can gain admission and succeed. On the other hand, current standards can be relaxed, or the practice of accepting students who made low grades through elementary and high school can be continued. Either of these alternatives deprives a majority of students of a good education or sends them out into the world unable to compete on equal terms.

Fortunately, there is a third choice which is realistic and should be carried out. A university should be relatively flexible in its admissions policies; only students with no possibility of successfully performing college work should be denied admission. Under this approach the university would not put too much stress on the students' high school performance. The concern should be placed on the student from entry until the time when the student is to graduate. For this reason, all entering students should take placement tests in the basic skills areas. Students should take these tests at the time of initial enrollment, not so they can be screened out, but so that any deficiencies can be identified. Students, faculty and administration should then work to eliminate the weaknesses so that the students will be able to carry on academic work at the university level. Those who are successful in maintaining the required grade level would also be required to pass competency examinations prior to graduation. Passing these competency examinations should ensure that the college graduates will be able to compete in the marketplace.

Common Sense Approach to the Basics

For at least ten years there have been discussions about returning to the basics in education. These discussions have grown out of the reality that too many of our youngsters in elementary and secondary schools have not been acquiring skills needed to perform well in college and to compete in a highly technical society. As America became more and more technically advanced, following World Wars I and II, curricula in our schools advanced rapidly to prepare youngsters for work in new electronic industries—television, radio, satellite transmission, transistor production, and eventually in the computer industry. The curricula

in most schools became particularly rich with science, math and language following the launching of Sputnik by Russia.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983 pointed out that:

> Each generation of Americans has outstripped its parents in education, in literacy, and in economic attainment. For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal; will not even approach, those of their parents.[22]

This sudden alarming decline in educational development has many causes. In many cases numerous "soft" courses were added to a school's offerings and students were allowed election of courses even to the exclusion of any basic requirements for advancement and graduation. As a result, many students elected easy courses such as "Being a good parent," sex education, etc., and a decreasing number took such courses as science, geometry, calculus, languages and history that expand their abilities and provide high level cognitive and analytical skills.

The Commission's report also indicated that:

> . . . these deficiencies come at a time when the demands for highly skilled workers in new fields is accelerating rapidly.

It further stated that:

> . . . the average graduate of our schools and colleges today is not as well-educated as the average graduate of 25 or 35 years ago, when a much smaller proportion of our population completed high school and college. The negative impact of this fact likewise cannot be overstated.[23]

Considering these circumstances, reform is clearly required. The educational decline now being perceived does not reflect just on the bright future leaders and inventors, but on the student body across the board. Therefore, solutions are needed that affect the entire range of students. Part of this reform includes recognizing that the schools cannot be responsible for all the needs of students. The

public schools never should have been expected to teach such courses as parenting, birth control, drivers education and child rearing. Training in these areas lies in the domain of the parents and in some instances the church. Education reform requires, among other things, diminishing the importance of these courses and the establishment of a national curriculum which "should focus on the goal of creating a Learning Society."[24] The learning society provides opportunities for the individual to expand through exposure to sources such as libraries, the work place, galleries, and museums. Dr. Ernest Boyer, former Commissioner of Education, refers to this curriculum reform as a "core curriculum."[25] The basis of this national curriculum grows out of the need for all students to possess a set of uniform knowledge and curriculum skills. This uniform curriculum would qualify students for advanced training opportunities in various areas based on their individual interests.

The proposed national high school curriculum is very close to that suggested by both the National Commission on Excellence and the Carnegie Commission which includes as a minimum three or four years of mathematics, four years of English, four years of social studies and humanities, three years of science, foreign language, expository writing and computer science. Of course it is essential that the elementary school curriculum contain courses that build a background for pursuing these courses at the secondary level.

Special attention needs to be given to the recommendation for including computer training in the curriculum. There are some potential dangers associated with computer training in the schools if care is not taken. First, it is suggested that training in computer science be considered as a basic skill. A distinction must be made between basic skill in computer science and the use of the computer as a teaching machine. Students should be free and encouraged to expand their skills and use of the computer in performing any number of class-related activities, but the teacher

should not rely on the computer as the major source for imparting knowledge to students. The computer is no substitute for the teacher and the personal element that only the teacher can provide. Thus, students should be proficient in computer operations to perform numerous learning activities and as preparation for work which carries a high demand in the job market.

It was reported recently that more than half of the 53,000 Maryland ninth graders who took the statewide proficiency examination in writing in the spring of 1983 failed. One conclusion drawn was that increasing use of electronic media has reduced the quantity of writing, thus reducing the quality of writing. The ability to write legibly is no doubt also affected. Paul Williams, Director of Testing for Maryland, said in a Washington *Post* article that, "as the electronic media and telephone increase in pervasiveness, we are probably not writing as many letters or writing as much in general. It is possible therefore that writing skills may have atrophied."[26] Educators should be careful that an increase in computer usage does not produce a consequent disuse of writing skills.

A further look at the dangers reveals that poorer school districts lag far behind more affluent districts and create a great disparity between middle class and poor children regarding their knowledge and skills in computer usage. Craig Savoye in *The Christian Science Monitor* noted that:

> Educators and others are concerned that this discrepancy is widening the gap between the haves and have nots in American education, and further exacerbating racial and class stratification in the United States.[27]

It is frustrating to observe that, while traditional barriers to education have tumbled, the leading edge of opportunity continues to elude the poor and isolates them from many of the better job opportunities. One great concern rests with the fact that large numbers of black students fall in the poor category. "To the extent that computer literacy and computer expertise are necessary for success in getting and keeping jobs, computer inequity is a serious problem,"

warns Ronald E. Anderson, Associate Professor, University of Minnesota, in the same article.

Conditions for broadening the gap between the rich and poor are only too prevalent. Extreme care must be taken to reverse current practices. The Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, found these disheartening facts:

> Elementary schools with large minority enrollments and those with mostly white students use their microcomputers for vastly different reasons, says a new study on computers in the classroom. Even when both enroll mostly low-income students, predominantly minority schools use *their microcomputers for remedial education,* while predominantly white schools use theirs to help above-average students, said the study. Minority schools concentrate on providing drill and practice programs to low-achieving students, hoping to bring up their level of achievement. *The white schools, on the other hand, believe that slow learners require the personal attention of a teacher.*[28]

Special attention also needs to be placed on the study of the English language. Many schools serve a large number of students who are not proficient in English usage. They consist mainly of two groups: (1) immigrants who speak little or no English, and (2) American citizens who have limited mastery of English (many in this latter group are black students). From these groups come the unskilled and unemployed. Consequently, the schools need to concentrate on making these students highly proficient in speaking and writing English. In America these two skills are the *sine qua non* for employment and advancement. Ernest Boyer states that in addition to speaking, students should "be required to take a writing course which we say is the most important and most neglected skill."[29]

The national or core curriculum should be the driving force behind setting and maintaining high standards in the schools. The success of this approach to curriculum development rests on constant evaluation of the students and the teachers, considering grades, growth and development. These measures are indicative of the quality of teaching provided in the classroom and may well be used as a basis

for determining inservice training needs for teachers and deciding whether to retain or replace teachers and administrators.

Athletics Within the Educational System

While the purpose of elementary and secondary schools and of colleges is to educate students, there are many activities in a school which take place outside the classroom. Clearly the mind can be nourished by newspapers, drama societies, debating clubs, language groups, science clubs and the like. Similarly, both intramural and extramural sports are beneficial.

In recent years the argument has been propounded that athletic programs have made it possible for the poor, and especially for blacks, to have the opportunity to go to college and get an education. Unfortunately, the reality has not always (or perhaps even often) lived up to the promise.

The question of the relationship of athletics to education, or the priority that should be placed on one versus the other is now gaining a great deal of attention. One part of the answer is that too many people, including education leaders, have lost sight of the fact that the mission and purpose of schooling is to educate. The sad fact is that athletic participation is too often implemented in a way that works against and interrupts the education process. Until school officials and athletic interests find a satisfactory way to coexist in the schools (the education arena), the educational experiences of many participating students will be flawed. Any solution must give heavy priority to the academic program—no other resolution is acceptable. Dr. Norman C. Francis, President, Xavier University, pointed out in a press statement that, "Athletics is an important part of the development process—but it is secondary, not primary."[30]

Conflicts between the demands of athletics and the requirements of academic programs have been around for a good number of years. Generally, they permeate the entire educational system. There are, however, special concerns relative to black students. Public attention is now being focused on the exploitation of black "super athletes" who

are energetically recruited and once enrolled, exploited and abused by being placed in academic programs that keep them eligible to participate in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sports but do not advance them toward skill development or graduation.

Even though this issue is normally related to college admission, eligibility and education, it really starts in the high schools with relaxed course requirements, low standards and a lack of guidance and encouragement in academic matters. Some high school coaches seem to have a "blind thirst" for winning (as their identification with success). Long, strenuous hours are required for practice and team participation. The lure for participating students and their parents is the luxurious life and stardom that come from a highly successful college athletic career and an eventual professional career.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education indicated that:

> . . secondary school curricula have been homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose. In effect we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main course . . . Twenty-five percent of the credits earned by general track high school students are in physical and health education, work experience outside the school, remedial English and mathematics, and personal service and development courses, such as training for adulthood and marriage.[31]

While such a situation is unfortunate for a student body generally, far worse is the fact that the academic program for black high school athletes is often more homogenized and even less instructive. Any person in our current society who does not possess skills to obtain a productive job following high school, and who does not have any skills other than athletic prowess to gain admission to college, most likely will be in for many years of frustration, disappointment and failure.[32]

At the college level, there are numerous well-publicized instances of black "super athletes" who attain college stardom but never experience success following college

either in the professional sports ranks or the general professions. In addition, numerous examples may be found of former college athletes who were given a full diet of a "strained," "watered down" curriculum only to maintain eligibility for athletes. Many of these students who were promoted through both high school and college only for the sake of eligibility (exploited), are then left to suffer humiliation, embarrassment and failure once their years of eligibility have ended. During 1982 and 1983 the national media gave wide coverage to one such black athiete who did not make the pros and could not even read. He has since enrolled with elementary and secondary students in Marva Collins' school in Chicago to learn elementary skills such as word attack and eventually reading.

At the 1983 Annual Meeting of the College Board it was stated that students in all programs must meet stiff academic challenges if they are to prepare for a rapidly changing society. Reacting to abuses and the exploitation of student athletes, the National Collegiate Athletic Association in 1982 adopted Proposition 48, which requires a 2.0 high school grade point average and a minimum score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or a score of 15 on the American College Test for its entering student athletes. The announcement of this standard created a furor from some black education leaders who viewed it as a racially motivated attack on black student athletes and as an effort to exclude blacks from intercollegiate sports programs in which many of them surpassed their white teammates.

Considering the national recognition of the danger of educational mediocrity, the low national academic and technical skills, and the excessively high unemployment of blacks, it is hard to believe that some black educators hold that athletic skills should be developed without regard for academic skills, but that has happened under the present eligibility rules. The authors of this paper contend that standards of admission must be used and that the standards set by Rule 48 may be too low. This contention is supported, generally, by two outstanding educators, both of whom are black. Dr. Norman C. Francis of the Commission

on Excellence and President of Xavier University, New Orleans, went even further into the issues and indicated in a press statement that too much discussion has centered around specific questions, such as the legitimacy of the S.A.T. What has not been thought out is the real problem, that is the failure of this nation's school system to properly educate all its youngsters. The major issue of providing an equal opportunity to quality education cuts across racial lines and is more directly related to economic levels than cultural or ethnic backgrounds.[33] Dr. Harry Edwards, Professor of Sociology, University of California at Berkeley, agrees and believes that, this situation, considered in combination with the athlete's educational underdevelopment, certainly helps explain why so many black athletes not only fail to achieve their expectations of life-long affluence but also frequently fall far short of the levels achieved by their non-athletic peers.

In addition to the generally weak curricula in schools across the nation and a special concern for the undereducation and abuse of black students, the exploitation and academic abuse of athletes ranks among our greatest educational concerns. Ironically, the historically black colleges, which have been the greatest resource available to black students, stand to lose in the economic battle to attract, educate and graduate black athletes. Nonetheless, these institutions must continue to provide a strong, balanced program for their student athletes as a matter of justice.

Somewhere along the way some people seem to have forgotten that schooling is about educating people and providing them with the social, technical and academic skills necessary to compete and succeed in life. Therefore, we would call upon those who are opposing Rule 48 to reverse themselves, to work for better academic preparation for athletes in high school and to support efforts to establish minimum standards for admission of athletes to college.

Another matter which is of equal importance relates to the experience of athletes while in college. Sports programs require many long hours, hard work and dedication

by the athletes. The colleges receive many benefits from their teams—gate receipts, national and regional fame, alumni praise and increased endowments—among many other benefits. In return, the colleges must give the athletes whatever support they need so that their education is not neglected or overlooked. We believe the NCAA should strongly support the need for colleges to develop their athletes' minds while using their athletic bodies.

Allow us to paraphrase Dr. Harry Edwards, a well-known California educator on this matter; he feels the athletes and the school enter into a contract, i.e., athletic performance in exchange for an earned education. The athletes always keep their part of the contract whereas the colleges and universities rarely do.

Bilingual Education and Black English

People from practically every country in the world are immigrating to America. Obviously the great majority speak a language other than English.[34] The early immigrants adopted English and most learned it as quickly as they could. Also, most parents saw to it that their children learned standard English because of the opportunities that would open up to them. In many cases the children of the immigrants learned English exclusively, and did not retain their parents' mother language. Often this was to avoid being different from the majority of their English speaking friends.

America's policy, however, is not to destroy the native culture or language of its citizens. In this regard Shirley M. Hufstedler, former Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, commented during a meeting dealing with regulations for bilingual education programs that "cultural diversity is one of America's greatest strengths. We would not suppress it if we could; and we should not suppress it if we could. But unity is also America's strength." She went further, however, and insisted that "the ability of every citizen to communicate in our *National language* is the keystone of unity"[35] (emphasis added).

The notion of one common language for America is deeply embedded in America's political expression. President Theodore Roosevelt stated wisely that we have room for but one language, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns one people out as Americans. This implies of course that there is nothing wrong with Korean, French, Chinese, Japanese, Haitian, Spanish, Portuguese, and German Americans keeping their language, but not as a first language.

America has had numerous experiences in which it had to respond to attempts at bilingualism. It stood fast on each occasion. In the 1840s, 1860s and 1870s Congress voted down pleas to print government documents in German. Predominantly French-speaking Louisiana sought statehood in 1812 with French as its language, but opposition was great. In response, Louisiana included a constitutional provision that made English its official language. A century later, New Mexico sought statehood; its request was delayed, however, until after an influx of settlers from the north and east had made English, not Spanish, the majority tongue.

Today there is strong opposition to bilingualism and its divisive potential. Voters in San Francisco in November 1983, voted 62% in favor of Proposition 0, which called upon the city of San Francisco to encourage Congress and the Administration to print voting ballots only in English. This vote now enhances support for a constitutional amendment that was introduced by Senator Walter D. Huddleston to make English the official language of the United States.

Indications of potential divisions based on language differences are evident in several locations. For example, there is talk by militant Hispanics that California, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona were stolen from Mexico and must be returned. What are the implications when Hispanics become the majority in these states and Spanish is the language frequently spoken?

In south Florida, in several Spanish-speaking barrios, blacks and whites are denied jobs and other opportunities

because they only speak English. Signs in the windows of many businesses indicate that "Only Spanish is spoken here."

Despite instances like these, English remains our national language and should be a unifying force which is crucial to the unity of the American government, business and educational systems.

Most education leaders, particularly in recent times, are placing a strong emphasis on restoring courses in foreign languages to the curricula in elementary and secondary schools, and in colleges and universities. The reasons for such encouragement should be carefully understood and followed. Studying a foreign language is not intended to enable Americans to communicate well with Americans. The unifying language, English, provides for that. It is, however, valuable so that people in this country will be able to understand and appreciate the cultures of people in other countries, their governments and policies, and so that American officials and citizens can relate and communicate better and more effectively with the government officials, leaders and citizens of other countries.

Bilingual education, unlike bilingualism, deals exclusively with the problem of teaching children whose primary language is not English in such a manner that they become proficient in English while learning other subject matter. "Formal schooling has a special obligation to help all students become skilled in the written and spoken use of English,"[36] according to Ernest L. Boyer, former U.S. Commissioner of Education and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This obligation is consistent with the Bilingual Education Act which states that the term, "Programs of bilingual education mean a program of instruction, designed for children of limited English proficiency in elementary or secondary schools, in which, with respect to the years of study to which such program is applicable—there is instruction given in, and study of, English, to the extent necessary to allow children to achieve competence in the English language. . . ."[37]

Relative to implementing these bilingual education principles, one should insist on two principles:

> First, each child must learn English and must learn it as quickly as possible. Second, while learning this language, children must not be allowed to fall behind their English-speaking classmates in other academic subjects.[38]

To implement the second principle, the implementing regulations permit instruction in "the native language of the child (to the extent necessary to allow children to achieve competence in the English language)."[39] An important aspect of the Bilingual Education Act is that instruction in the child's native language is discontinued once proficiency in English is attained.[40]

Another approach to teaching children whose primary language is not English is called teaching "English as a second language." In this method children's instructions are started and continued in English (no instruction is provided in the child's primary language). In fact, English as second language teachers may not be proficient in the language of the students. With this approach the student is likely to fall behind in other subjects while becoming proficient in English; this obviously constitutes a significant and harmful feature.

There are some guiding principles that must be adhered to when teaching children whose primary language is other than English. The teacher must respect both the culture and the language of the children and never abuse or "shame" the children for either, and the teacher must never knowingly or subtly discourage the children from maintaining either their native language or their culture. This is not to say that the school or the teacher has any responsibility for instructions or support in maintaining the students' language or culture. In fact, current Federal guidelines clearly are not designed to maintain either the language or the culture of any group.

Federal and state assistance programs must be carefully implemented to attain their intended goals and to avoid producing undesirable consequences such as dependency. Citizens should support the maintenance of their culture through community institutions of their choosing. There are several rich traditions in this regard. Jewish people,

Asian Americans and Catholics whose youngsters attend public schools, send their children during evenings and weekends to institutions of their respective religions or ethnic background to receive training in their traditions. This is not the job of a school's bilingual education program.

The sixties ushered in the "do your own thing" attitude. This attitude has found its way into schools throughout America. It has produced situations in which black children have been allowed to attend classes when they want to, stay on the basketball courts as long as they wish, and in general pass through high school speaking broken English (often referred to as black English) and possessing very low skills in standard English. This "do your own thing" attitude has found its way into suburban schools, where many white students are also graduating without adequate skills to acquire good jobs. Now there is much talk about Spanish-speaking youths graduating from high schools without an adequate command of English to understand instructions and not equipped to hold responsible supervisory positions because they have not mastered enough English. Consequently, large numbers of these youths are unemployed. A perceptive response to this situation is provided by Herman Badillo, Deputy for Education in New York City, who is a Puerto Rican. He feels that "we have plenty of jobs in the skyscrapers of Midtown Manhattan. The problem is that the Hispanic kids can't spell."[41]

The answer is to stress English and other fundamentals in school. Our children cannot succeed without a good education. The former Secretary of Education said it well: "Today . . . the future for young people without (good) schooling is bleak and getting bleaker all the time. Education cannot guarantee a happy life or productive employment; but lack of education is very nearly a guarantee of lifelong poverty, dependence and despair."[42]

Before it is too late for the current generation of youths, it is hoped that parents and educators will realize that black English and other easy ways out, including forms of bilingual education that leave children crippled, are not the

important issues for racial and ethnic groups. All racial and ethnic groups in America must learn and practice standard English so they will be able to compete with their most articulate competitors.

Since the authors of this chapter are black, their views on black English should provide some interesting insights on black English relative to education and to employment opportunities.

In this nation, academic advancement is not possible without first mastering standard English. In America the mastery of English is a part of progress. Therefore, few, if any, black students who wish to succeed in today's competitive world, who want a share of tomorrow's dream, and not just a glimpse of it, can expect success and satisfaction without speaking and writing standard English.

One should deal with the question of whether black English is a language. In our opinion it is not a language. Rather, it is a medium of communicating for a small number of people; moreover, its structure is not uniform, and it is not the major tongue of any racial or ethnic group. So, again, the best answer must be that it is not a language. A better description of black English is that it is an example of broken English used by some black citizens, who for whatever reason, have not learned to communicate well in standard English. For those who insist that it is a language, the question is, what practical use does it have? It does not allow for communication with individuals except for a very limited group of people. It hinders the movement of its users to the social circles of better educated standard English users, and to success in the business and professional world. In other words, it is a limiting detriment rather than one that opens doors to better training, education and careers. At best black English constitutes a personal preference with use limited to a few segments of community people in small, very personal and private settings; it is a form of communication used by a very small portion of society.

The recent court ruling by U.S. District Judge Charles W. Joiner in Ann Arbor, Michigan which calls for implicit

recognition of black English presents cause for great concern.[43] It approves of children getting their education in a tongue that has limited acceptance in society, and consequently black English will certainly doom many of them to limited low level occupations. Further, and probably more seriously, the ruling seems to imply a belief that those school children are unable to learn the basic language of America. Judge Joiner's decision requires recognition of black English even though it has no uniform grammatical rules. He indicates that the teachers at the school, also, should be trained to teach black English to the students. Can they really be educated to do so? Or will they just pretend, resulting in the students suffering even more? All black American students have grown up with enough association or proximity to speakers of standard English that they can fully understand any instructions given in standard English. Consequently, all of their instructions should be in English.[44]

Because Judge Joiner has rendered his ruling, black English may be taught or utilized in the Ann Arbor schools. The affected students, however, should never be forced to abandon standard English; moreover, the students should receive careful and thorough explanations of why it is better to learn and practice standard English rather than black English in the school, the work place and in social and professional settings.

Success in the marketplace requires hard work. Everyone who has succeeded knows that and also that there are many obstacles in the way. Speaking non-standard English is one more unnecessary obstacle for black students. Thirty years ago black Americans were marching and demonstrating for the doors of education and opportunity to be opened equally for all; that goal has almost been realized. Let's not throw up new obstacles such as black English to complicate the problem and reduce opportunities that have been gained with great difficulty.

Affirmative Action and Motivation to Learn

Affirmative action, with respect to its appropriateness and effectiveness, is one of the most widely discussed civil

rights issues at this time. Among the observations being made are these: (1) a few white Americans believe it leads to hiring or admitting unqualified persons, usually black, (2) some believe it leads to reverse discrimination, and (3) many claim that it has not been effective. The fact of the matter is that requiring organizations to hire or admit persons from among groups that have been historically excluded only partly helps balance a wrong that has been practiced throughout American history.

It is appropriate in this chapter to look at affirmative action in relation to its impact on learning. Access to good jobs directly influences the motivation that black or any other children have toward attaining a good education. If students can see and be reasonably assured that the diligent pursuit of education and the development of skills lead to good jobs with good pay which produces good living, they are more likely to stay in school and study hard. Conversely, if the harvest does not seem bountiful, they are more likely to drop out and less likely to be diligent.

Affirmative action activities in the education field itself obviously have an immediate and direct impact on black students and teachers. Therefore, we need to look rather closely at some of the employment practices in school systems and universities and at student admission programs in colleges and universities.

In addition to the constitutional principles of equal employment opportunity, there are sound educational principles for hiring and maintaining a balanced staff and faculty that reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of the student body of a given school. Among these principles are (1) reduction of racial tension, (2) an improved and retained understanding of the unique needs and concerns of the entire student body, (3) greater assurance of fairness in both treatment of the students and curriculum content and (4) role models which serve as motivating forces for students. A mixed faculty is desirable and beneficial even in schools where only one race is present. Stereotypes can be reduced, greater respect for racial and cultural differences can be promoted and cross cultural relationships can be enhanced.

There were many black educators in southern districts prior to school desegregation. Following desegregation, that situation changed drastically when massive dismissal, displacement and demotion of black principals and teachers took place. Dr. Benjamin Epstein of the National Association of Secondary School Principals stated that, "when schools are desegregated and must serve black and white students alike, the 'powers-that-be' who select the staff for these schools apparently try to make sure the white students will not be under the direct authority of a black principal." He stated that "there seems to be little or no compunction about having the situation in reverse . . ."[45] Several examples will suffice to show what happened to black principals:

> In South Carolina, the number of black high school principals was reduced from 144 to 33 between 1965 and 1970. Alabama in 1967 had approximately 250 black public school principals, but by 1970 the total had been reduced to 50—a drop of 80 percent. Perhaps most dramatic is what happened in North Carolina between 1963 and 1970. In 1963, black principals of high schools totaled 227; in 1970, there were only 8 black high school principals remaining—a drop of more than 96 percent.[46]

Dr. Albert Baxter, Associate Professor of Education at Arkansas AM&N College, documented the displacement of black teachers in 62 of the State's 382 districts during 1969, the year in which each district desegregated. "In most instances," said Dr. Baxter, "almost all black teachers were gotten rid of."[47] Intentional efforts to reverse the above conditions have been started and some black principals have been restored in southern districts.

In northern, south-western, mid-western and western states where schools were not segregated by state law, there were usually few, if any, black teachers and administrators. Arguably, it was affirmative action policies that brought equitable numbers of minority teachers and administrators to these districts and to state education offices, as well as recent increases in management level staff and teachers to non-southern schools. This also applies to colleges and

universities, where there were hardly any minority presidents, deans, chairmen, staff, and teaching faculty except in the black colleges and universities. A few major universities and state higher education systems have been headed by black educators. In addition, there have been sizeable increases in the numbers of deans, department heads, chairmen, staff, teaching faculty and program directors during the same period of time.

Likewise, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of black students admitted to predominantly white institutions. Dr. Mary F. Barry, former Assistant Secretary of Education, noted that, "in 1978 of the 866,315 black students out of a total undergraduate student population of 8,513,310, seven in ten were enrolled in such institutions."[48] This increase in the mainly white institutions inevitably signified a sizeable, positive increase in the overall number of black youngsters pursuing higher education. The difficulty is that a disproportionately high percentage of black students who receive the baccalaureate degree still graduate from historically black institutions. Many other students are returning to black institutions because of admission and retention problems in white colleges.

There are numerous positive effects for those black students who graduate from mainly white schools. Many are able to gain training in fields that are not available at the historically black schools. In addition they become acquainted with and move into the referral system of big business and make contact with future business and corporate leaders and decision-makers, their white classmates. These are important and valuable gains which could lead to much higher levels of success than might have been otherwise anticipated.

Success of black students is notably higher in the most prestigious private and public white institutions which have the lowest attrition rates of the black students they enroll. Most often these prestigious schools recruit black students with high grade point averages and SAT scores which place them among the group of students least likely

to fail in any case. The less prestigious colleges, which make up the largest number of predominantly white institutions, have high attrition rates because of less stringent selection criteria, as well as "lack of preparation and the absence of appropriate remediation, advising and counseling . . ."[49]

Among the myriad of affirmative action efforts around the country, certainly some failures can be found. This is also true for any endeavor, profession, occupation, or business venture. No doubt such programs will continue to generate controversy, particularly among those whose first thoughts include "incompetent blacks," "preferential treatment," and "reverse discrimination," when "affirmative" is mentioned. These programs are not perfect, but neither were the outrageous and systemic conditions that caused their creation. It was imperative that the situation of discrimination be corrected. It is to be hoped, however, that once the goals of fair and equal access to education and employment have been achieved, and our society has come to accept that goal that extraordinary compulsion will no longer be necessary.

Notes

1. Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, *The State of Black America and The Challenge to Overcome Against The Odds*, printed by the Communications Department of Operation PUSH, Chicago, Illinois, January 31, 1983, p. 2-3.
2. Flora Johnson, "The Intelligence Question/Are Black People Stupid?" *Chicago Reader*, Vol. 9, No. 33, May 16, 1980, p. 1.
3. Report by Benjamin H. Alexander, Member, Washington, D.C. School Board, AFT Conference, *Racism In Education*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 25, 1968, at Benjamin Franklin Hall.
4. Response by Benjamin H. Alexander, President Chicago State University, to *Chicago Reader* article, "Are Black People Stupid?" Published in *Chicago Reader*, September 1980, pp. 2-4, 8.
5. Report by Benjamin H. Alexander, President, D.C. Federation of Civic Associations, at Mayor's Summer Youth Kick-Off Program, Banneker Stadium, Washington, D.C., June 17, 1972.
6. Ibid., p. 4-6.
7. Only one of over 250 national leaders—black, white and brown—who spoke out openly and forcefully against Black English (the great majority approved of the use of Black English) at the National Invita-

tional Symposium on Black English that was held at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, February 21-23, 1980.

8. This is very evident in a recent court decision, which will be discussed later in the chapter, *Martin Luther King Junior Elementary School Children, et. al,* Plaintiffs *v. Ann Arbor School District Board,* Defendant. Civ. A. No. 7-71861, U.S. District Court, E.D. Michigan, S.D., July 12, 1979, on submission of Plan, August 24, 1979.
9. W.C. Edwards, Preston M. Royster and Lazarus Bates, *The History of the Education of Black Citizens in Halifax County: 1866-1969,* (Springfield, Va.: Banister Press, 1979), p. 12.
10. Ibid., p. 48.
11. Ibid., p. 42.
12. Ibid., p. 46.
13. Ibid., p. 27.
14. Reverend Wellington E. Webb, *Antrim Church and Mission School for Colored People,* December 1888. (A Report to the Antrim Parish of the Episcopal Church.)
15. W.C. Edwards, et al., *The History of the Education of Black Citizens in Halifax County,* p. 34.
16. Dedication Program of the Halifax-Pittsylvania County Community Center, September 10, 1978.
17. Joan Beck, "Asians Rise to Top of the Class", *Washington Post,* July 31, 1981; W.V. Grant and L.J. Eiden, *Digest of Education Statistics 1982,* National Center for Education Statistics, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), pp. 70-71, 122-123.
18. Russell L. Adams, *Great Negroes Past and Present* (Chicago: Afro-American Publishing Company, 1963).
19. Alice Allison Dunnigan, *A Black Woman's Experience—From School House to White House* (Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company, 1974).
20. Earl J. Ogletree and Marie Chambers, *ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education,* Teachers College, Columbia University, May 1979, No. ED. 164-716: *Black Inner-City High School Students Surprisingly Conservative on Rights Question,* Phi Delta Kappan, April 1978, pp. 563-64.
21. Michael A. Olivas, *The Dilemma of Access* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1979), p. 180.
22. National Commission on Excellence In Education, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 11.
23. Ibid., p. 10.
24. Ibid., p. 13.
25. Ernest L. Boyer, *High School* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 302.
26. The *Washington Post,* November 30, 1983, p. A1.
27. *The Christian Science Monitor,* November 10, 1983, p. 24-26.
28. *Education Daily,* Washington, D.C., October 31, 1983, p. 1.
29. *Harrisburg Evening News,* November 5, 1983.

30. *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1983, p. 33.
31. National Commission on Excellence In Education, *A Nation At Risk*, p. 18-19.
32. Personal communication from Mr. Frank Bolden, retired Director of the Department of Health, Physical Education, Athletics & Safety of the District of Columbia Public Schools, President of the Washington, D.C. Federation of Civic Associations, July 22, 1983; by Mr. Bolden "Proposal 48—Blight or Blessing" distributed within District of Columbia school system.
33. *Atlantic Monthly*, op. cit., p. 33.
34. Essay Against A Confusion of Tongues, *Time* Magazine, June 13, 1983, p. 30-31.
35. Shirley M. Hufstedler, a speech made at a hearing to consider proposals for school regulations, San Antonio, Texas, September 8, 1983, p. 9.
36. Ernest L. Boyer, *High School*, p. 302.
37. Public Law 95-561, Sec. 703(a), (4), (A)(1)—November 1, 1978.
38. Hufstedler, San Antonio speech, p. 8.
39. Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), CFR 500.4.
40. Ibid., p. 10.
41. Chicago *Times*, October 17, 1983, p. 22.
42. Hufstedler, San Antonio speech, p. 6.
43. *Martin Luther King Junior Elementary School Children, et. al*, Plaintiffs *v. Ann Arbor School District Board*, Defendant. Civ. A. No. 7-71861, U.S. District Court, E.D. Michigan, S.D., July 12, 1979, on submission of Plan, August 24, 1979.
44. Educational Excellence Network, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, October 1983, Vol. II, Number 10, p. 79.
45. Testimony given by Dr. Benjamin Epstein, Chairman, Status and Welfare Committee, National Association of Secondary School Principals, before the U.S. Senate, Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, June 14, 1971.
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